

ULSTER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

Technical Committee Meeting

Meeting Summary

August 8, 2006
Ulster County Community College
Stone Ridge, NY

Members

Present:	Joel B. Brink**	Town of Ulster
	Barbara Budik**	Town of Saugerties
	Michael Campbell	Village of Saugerties
	Toni Hokanson	Town of New Paltz
	Alphonso Lanzetta*	Town of Marlborough
	Nadine Lemmon**	Town of Gardiner
	Bruce Loertscher	Town of Plattekill
	Richard Peters**	NYSDOT
	Toni Roser**	City of Kingston Citibus
	Cynthia Ruiz**	UC Area Transit
	Charlie Schaller	UC Traffic Safety Board
	Bob Shepard	Town of Lloyd
	Michael Shultis*	Town of Hurley
	Jason West*	Village of New Paltz

[Policy Committee quorum present]

Staff

Present:	Sweta Basnet	UCTC
	Marianne Davis	UC Planning Department
	Jean Gunsch	NYMTC – Region 8 MPO Staff
	Bill Tobin	UCTC

Others

Present:	Nancy Hammond	Town of Lloyd
	Kathy Nolan	Town of Shandaken
	Myles Putman	Shuster Associates
	Carol Ryan	Metro Pool

⁺Permanent Voting Member

^{*}Current Voting Member (Until June 4, 2007)

^{**}Voting Proxy

[^]Non-Voting Advisory Member

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tobin at 10:02 a.m. Those in attendance introduced themselves.

CALL FOR CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Tobin asked for approval of the minutes from the May 9, 2006 meeting.

Motion to approve by Ms. Ruiz, seconded by Ms. Lemmon. All in favor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Tobin read through the announcements, updates and staff activities listed on the agenda. Mr. Campbell updated the Committee on the second public meeting for Phase 2 of the Saugerties Area Mobility Analysis.

Mr. Tobin announced the initiation of the Route 209 Corridor Sustainable Transportation and Land Use Plan effort. A project management team has been established and will include the Mayor of Ellenville and Town Supervisors from Wawarsing, Marbletown, Rochester, and Hurley. An RFP for the project is being developed and will be advertised in late September to retain consultant services to assist with the project.

Ms. Basnet provided an update on the countywide traffic monitoring (traffic count) program. Ms. Basnet stated that she has been processing traffic counts for the past two months and hopes to have the counts approved by NYSDOT in the coming weeks. A Year 2005 Traffic Count Report will be prepared by staff and submitted to UCTC members (and available to the public) later this year or early the next.

Mr. Putnam asked if the report could be more refined next year and offered his assistance. Mr. Tobin invited Mr. Putnam to meet with staff to discuss how the traffic count report could be improved.

Mr. Tobin stated that the next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for October 3, 2006, and may not have enough agenda items for a vote and suggested holding a Technical Committee meeting instead. Ms. Ruiz suggested an informational meeting on Public Transportation as a possible topic. A consensus was reached to keep the scheduled meeting as a Policy Committee meeting but recognizing few, if any, voting actions are anticipated. The next Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 7, 2006 at 10:00 am.

NEW BUSINESS

Transportation Enhancements (TE) Program. Mr. Tobin passed around a handout of the final Transportation Enhancements (TE) application rankings. He stated that the rankings must be submitted to NYSDOT no later than August 31, 2006. Mr. Tobin explained that a Policy Committee vote is not required. Also, it may not be feasible or practical to send the TE rankings to the Policy Committee on short notice. Mr. Tobin recommended that, with the Technical Committee's permission, the list be submitted to NYSDOT with a cover letter signed by the UCTC Chairman, David Donaldson. Ms. Hokanson stated the TE Sub-Committee was created this purpose and the list of ranked TE applications should be submitted on to NYSDOT.

Ms. Ruiz asked if the matching funds were in place for TE applications submitted. Ms.

Hokanson said every application identified the source for their matching funds.

Ms. Ruiz asked why UCTC does the ranking if NYSDOT selects the projects.

Mr. Peters answered that all MPOs send NYSDOT their ranked projects and a Statewide Committee, appointed by the Governor of New York State, reviews and considers the MPOs ranked list of projects. NYSDOT generally follows the rankings but they don't have to.

[It should be noted that, unbeknownst to UCTC staff at the time, a Policy Committee quorum was present during this discussion.]

Motion to Accept the TIP Sub-Committee's ranking of proposed TE Projects as presented and forward to the UCTC Secretary at NYSDOT Region-8 with a signed letter from Chairman Donaldson.

Motion by Mr. Shepard, seconded by Ms. Budik. All in favor.

FFY 2008-2012 TIP Update Process. Mr. Tobin discussed the TIP application and project evaluation process. Mr. Tobin stated that the TIP Sub-Committee recommended the weighting of criteria to remain the same. Mr. Tobin briefly discussed the modifications to the project selection criteria and TIP application format. Mr. Tobin informed the Committee that the UCTC website has a web page dedicated to the TIP update process which also enables people to download the TIP applications.

Mr. Tobin stated that if a municipality is submitting more than one TIP application they need to indicate their project's priority. Mr. Tobin stated that the UCTC web page has project evaluation criteria located under TIP Sub-Committee. Applications have been updated to be mode/project specific in an effort to be more user friendly for applicants.

There was some discussion on how safety data can help the TIP Sub-Committee better evaluate TIP applications. Mr. Tobin stated that both the Traffic Safety Board and NYSDOT have some safety and crash data.

Mr. Tobin announced that the Chairman Donaldson has officially made a "call for transportation projects" in support of updating the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with a TIP application closing date of September 22, 2006 at 4:00 p.m. A call for projects letter from the Chairman will be forthcoming to Ulster County municipalities. Ms. Hokanson asked if there would be an informational workshop session scheduled. Mr. Tobin said no TIP application workshop is planned at this time but stated that staff will make themselves available to any municipality having questions or needing application assistance or guidance.

Mr. Loetscher asked about a sidewalk project in Plattekill. Mr. Tobin stated that points may also be awarded for security and safety issues associated with Plattekills sidewalk application. He asked Mr. Loetscher if a sidewalk district has been established, and if not, it may be advantageous for the Town to develop and adopt one.

Mr. Tobin announced that NYSDOT may be advertising a call for projects in support of a

federally mandated program called “Safe Routes to School”. It is believed this program will be facilitated in a similar manner as the Transportation Enhancements (TE) program.

Mr. Peters did not have a schedule for a Safe Routes To School “call for project applications” but cautioned the Committee that the funds available for this program are much less than what’s available through the TE process.

Mr. Tobin said it appears as if NYSDOT is gearing up to initiate the Safe Routes to School call for applications process within the next 3-6 months. Mr. Tobin said NYSDOT will keep the UCTC informed of developments and the exact amount of funds available for competition. A web site is dedicated to the Safe Routes to School program. For more information visit: www.saferoutesinfo.org/

The contact information for the New York State Safe Routes to School Coordinator is:

Dwight Cunningham
Safe Routes to School State Coordinator
New York State Dept of Transportation
50 Wolf Road, POD 5-4
Albany NY 12232

Ph: 518-457-8340
Fax: 518-457-8358
Email: dcunningham@dot.state.ny.us

TIP Amendment Procedures. Mr. Tobin briefly discussed the need for a better defined process to make changes to the TIP. Mr. Tobin discussed examples of how other MPOs in New York State handle their TIP changes and how they might be beneficial to Ulster County.

Ms. Ruiz provided an example of how a TIP amendment delay may interfere with transit operations.

Mr. Tobin presented and compared the TIP modification processes from the Buffalo-Niagara MPO, Rochester MPO, and the Albany MPO. Ms. Hokanson recommended the UCTC consider going with a similar format used by the Albany MPO. Mr. Tobin stated no formal action is required but said the updated TIP modification procedures can be further discussed next year as part of the overall adoption of the FFY 2008-2012 TIP Update. [Coincidentally, the Glens Falls MPO utilizes the same process as the Albany MPO.]

OTHER/OLD BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Mr. Putman stated he has been working closely with the Town of Esopus in the Port Ewen area. He indicated they would be interested in the TIP application process for sidewalks as well as the Safe Routes to School initiative. Mr. Peters reminded people

in attendance that there was not a lot of funding available for the Safe Routes to School Program.

Ms. Nolan stated she would have preferred the Transportation Enhancements (TE) application rankings be made available to the public. Also, Ms. Nolan would prefer to have TE applications be considered for non-technical points (merits). Ms. Nolan stated she would like the TE process to be inclusive rather than exclusive. She also stated she would like to see an appeals process established or some way to discuss changes or amendments to the TIP process. Ms. Nolan stated she thought it would be helpful to have a link to original project scores. She added that projects should be rescored along with the amendments to allow for subjective discussion.

Ms. Ruiz stated representatives on the Policy Committee can “barter” with each other to come to agreements on which projects to advance. She also stated that she was disappointed with the ranking of certain TE applications as well.

Mr. Tobin stated that there was a merit discussion after the projects were scored. Mr. Tobin further stated that the TIP Sub-Committee felt comfortable with the scores presented as they (the scores) reflect how applications scored when the evaluation criteria, established by NYSDOT, was applied. Mr. Tobin reminded the Committee that NYSDOT in Albany makes the final decision on which TE projects to award, not the UCTC.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.